

Centre Name: Heathfield Community School



EXAMINATIONS

Special Consideration

Policy

Centre Number: 63235

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What is special consideration

Special consideration is a post-examination adjustment to a candidate's mark or grade to reflect temporary illness, temporary injury or some other event outside of the candidate's control at the time of the assessment, which has had, or is reasonably likely to have had, a material effect on a candidate's ability to take an assessment or demonstrate his or her normal level of attainment in an assessment.

Special consideration can only seek to go some way to assist a candidate affected by a potentially wide range of difficulties, emotional or physical, which may influence performance in examinations. It cannot remove the difficulty faced by the candidate. There will be situations where candidates should not be entered for an examination. Only minor adjustments can be made to the mark awarded because to do more than this would jeopardise the standard of the examination.

(JCQ A guide to the special consideration)

This document is further referred to in this policy as **SC**

All exams are measuring what a candidate knows and can do. The overall grades awarded must reflect the level of attainment demonstrated in the examination(s).

The grades awarded do not necessarily reflect the candidates' true level of ability if attainment has been considerably affected over a long period of time. Where long term circumstances have prevented the candidate from reaching the competence standards it may not be possible to make an adjustment.

Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to identify roles and responsibilities in the special consideration process and confirms that Heathfield agrees to submit any applications for special consideration where candidates meet the published criteria.

(JCQ General regulations for approved centres)

Eligibility for special consideration

Roles and Responsibilities

Head of centre

- Is familiar with the contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to the annually updated JCQ publication **SC**.
- Ensures that, where relevant and in eligible situations, applications for special consideration are submitted to awarding bodies by the exams officer.

Exams Officer

- Understands the criteria as detailed in **SC** to determine where candidates will/will not be eligible for special consideration.
- Ensures that, where relevant and in eligible situations, applications for special consideration are submitted to awarding bodies.

Teaching staff and /or SENCo

- Provide any appropriate evidence or information that may be required to determine a candidate's eligibility for special consideration.

Candidates (or parents/carers)

- Provide any medical or other evidence that may be required to determine eligibility for special consideration.

Applying for special consideration

Where eligible, special consideration is applied for in a specific exam series where candidates have been fully prepared and have covered the whole course but performance in the examination, or in the production of controlled assessment, coursework or non-examination assessment, is materially affected by adverse circumstances beyond their control.

Some examples where it may be appropriate to apply for special consideration are :

Where a candidate may arrive for an exam and is clearly unwell, extremely distressed and/or may have sustained an injury that requires emergency access arrangements to be put in place :

- The candidate will be kept comfortable and under supervision from the required time while appropriate arrangements are put in place for he/she to take the exam in the best possible conditions.
- A judgement will be made on how the candidate's situation or disposition affected performance in the exam.
- Where appropriate and where eligible, special consideration is applied for.

Where candidates may be affected by a major disturbance in the exam room (emergency evacuation etc.) special consideration is applied for on behalf of all candidates.

Where a candidate takes three or more timetabled exams on the same day and the total duration of all papers is more than 5 hours 30 minutes (GCSE) including any approved extra time but not any time taken for supervised rest breaks special consideration for an allowance on last paper taken is applied for.

Where a candidate may be affected by a minor disturbance in the exam room caused by another candidate (momentary bad behaviour, mobile phone ringing etc.), special consideration cannot be applied for.

If a candidate is absent for acceptable reasons, and the centre can verify this, special consideration is applied for if the exam missed is in the terminal series and the minimum requirements for enhanced grading in cases of acceptable absence can be met. If there is an opportunity to re-enter the candidate in the next available exam series, the centre will make the entry and special consideration is not applied for.

Where other issues or problems affect a candidate or a group of candidates, special consideration is explored in **SC5** and applied for where eligible. This might include, for example:

- Requesting an honorary certificate
- A short extension to controlled assessment / coursework / non-examination assessment deadlines.
- Submitting a reduced quantity of controlled assessment / coursework / non-examination assessment (shortfall in work).
- Lost or damaged work.
- Candidates taking an incorrect or defective question paper.
- Candidates undertaking the wrong controlled assessment assignment, or non-assessment assignment.

Where a candidate may be eligible for special consideration (a post assessment adjustment) in a vocational qualification, the centre follows the special consideration guidance and awarding body guidance to determine if, when and how an adjustment can be applied for.

Processing applications for special consideration

Roles and Responsibilities

Head of Centre

- Ensures where a candidate may be a relative of the Exams Officer, (this includes step-family, foster family and similar relationships), the application is authorised by an alternative member of centre staff.

Exams Officer

- Ensures applications are processed as required by the awarding bodies.
- Keeps evidence to support applications on file until after the publication of results and if requested provide evidence to support applications where this may be by an awarding body.
- Meets the required deadline(s) for submitting applications.

Teaching staff and/or SENCo

- Provide any appropriate evidence or information that may be required to support a candidate's application for special consideration.

Candidates (or parents/carers) will

- Provide any required medical or other evidence that may be required to support an application for special consideration.
- Head of Year to liaise with Exams Officer regarding students who may be affected and inform candidates and parents about the process and the decision taken by the school.

Submitting applications for special consideration

Where a candidate or group of candidates is/are eligible for special consideration applications are submitted to the relevant awarding body following the published processes in **SC**.

Evidence to support applications is kept on file until after the publication of results.

Timetables written exams

- For GCE, GCSE and BTEC qualifications, applications for individual candidates are submitted online by logging into the relevant awarding body secure extranet site and following the links to special consideration.
- The processes for submitting a single application to cover all exams where a candidate is present but disadvantaged and a separate application for each day where a candidate is absent from an examination for an acceptable reason detailed in **SC** are followed.
- For other qualifications, applications will be submitted online where the awarding body's secure system accepts these.
- The paper **form 10** JCQ/SC Application for special consideration is **only** completed and submitted where online system does not accept applications for a particular qualification.
- For groups of candidates, applications are made online where the awarding body's secure system accepts group applications or form 10 will be completed.
- The paper **form 14** JCQ/ME Self certification for candidates who have missed an examination is **only** completed by a candidate where circumstances warrant this and is not used where the centre knows the candidate was ill.

Internally assessed work

- Where appropriate, applications are made online where the awarding body's secure system accepts them or Form 10 (special consideration) is completed and submitted.
- Where a short extension to a deadline is being requested an application is submitted online or by direct mail, dependent on the awarding body.
- Should make it clear that applying for special consideration is not a guarantee of receiving it. We will know the outcome of the application but will not be told the amount / percentage applied by the exam board.
- Where an application relates to a shortfall in work, this is submitted online or by completing Form 10 (special consideration), dependent on the awarding body.
- Where an application relates to lost or damaged work, this is submitted online or by completing **form 15** JCO/LCW Notification of lost centre assessed work, dependent on the awarding body.

Post assessment adjustments – vocational qualifications

- Where relevant and eligible, form **VQ/SC** Application for special consideration Vocational qualifications is completed and submitted to the awarding body.
- Minimum requirements for enhancing grading in cases of acceptable candidates **must** have covered the whole course.